The Pagan Library

Artesian Waters

Banjo Peterson

Now the stock have started dying for the Lord has sent a drought
We're sick of prayers and providence, we're going to do without
With the derrick up above us and the solid earth below
We are waiting at the lever for the word to let her go
And it's down, deeper down, oh we're going deeper down

As the drill is plugging downward at a thousand feet a level
If the Lord won't send us water then we'll get it from the Devil
Yes, we'll get it from the Devil deeper down

Now our engine's made in Glasgow by a very canny Scot
He's marked her twenty horsepower, but he don't know what is what
When Canadian Bill is firing with the sun-dried gitchy logs
She can equal thirty horses and a score or so of dogs
And it's down, deeper down, oh we're going deeper down

And if we fail to find the water then it's ruin to the squatter
For the drought is on the station and the weather's getting hotter
But we're bound to find the water deeper down

But the shaft has started caving and the sinking's very slow
And the yellow rods are bending on the solid earth below
And the tubes are always jamming and they can't be made to shift
'Til we nearly burst the engine with a forty horsepower lift
And it's down, deeper down, oh we're going deeper down

Though the shaft is always caving and the tubes are always jamming
We'll fight our way to water while the stubborn drill is ramming
While the stubborn drill is ramming deeper down

But there's no artesian water for we've passed three thousand feet
And the contract price is growing and the boss he's nearly beat
Well it must be down beneath us so it's down we've got to go
Though she's bumping on the solid rock four thousand feet below
And it's down, deeper down, oh we're going deeper down

And it's time they heard us knocking on the roof of Satan's dwelling
We'll get artesian water if we cave the roof of Hell in
Yes we'll get artesian water deeper down

And it's half the whistles blowing in a wild exultant blast
And the boys are madly cheering, for they've struck the flow at last
And it rushing up the tubing from four thousand feet below

'Til it spouts about the casing in a million gallon flow
And it's down, deeper down, oh it comes from further down

It is flowing, ever flowing in a free unstinted measure
From the silent, hidden places where the old Earth hides her treasure,
Where the old Earth hides her treasure deeper down

So it's clear away the timber and it's let the water run
How it glimmers in the shadow, how it flashes in the sun
By the silent belts of timber, by the miles of blazing plain
It is bringing hope and comfort to the thirsty land again
And it's down, deeper down, oh it comes from further down

To the tortured thirsty cattle, bringing gladness in it's going
Through the droughty days of summer it is flowing, ever flowing
It is flowing, ever flowing further down

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